

PEABODY.

To this letter Mr. Peabody received in a few days the following reply:— LONDON, March 15, 1862. Sir.—We have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th inst., apprising us of your munificent appropriation of £150,000 towards ameliorating the condition of the poor of London, and intimating your wish that we should act in the capacity of trustees for the application of this fund, on principles which you have indicated for our guidance.

Whether we consider the purity of the motive, the magnitude of the gift, or the discrimination displayed in selecting the purposes to which it is to be applied, we cannot but feel that it is for the nation to appreciate, rather than for a few individuals to express their gratitude for, an act of beneficence which has few parallels (if any) in modern times.

For ourselves, we are deeply conscious of the honor implied by the confidence you have reposed in us, as the administrators and guardians of your bounty; and it only remains for us to assure you of the satisfaction with which we shall accept this trust, and the zeal with which we shall address ourselves to the discharge of its duties, so soon as its precise nature is defined, and the arrangements for its administration sufficiently organized.

Ever faithfully yours, CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS, STANLEY, J. EMERSON TENNENT, J. M. LAMPSON, J. S. MORGAN, To George Peabody, Esq., London.

"This generously endowed," says the report for 1865, "alike with funds and with discretion to choose the mode of their employment, the first care of the trustees was to obtain a deed so framed as to confer legal powers on those who were to be intrusted with their administration, and to insure their undeviating application to the generous objects contemplated by the giver. But at this stage considerable difficulty was encountered, arising mainly from the fact that the large amount to be expended was not a bequest by will, in which case precedents are sufficiently numerous, but gifts during the lifetime of the giver, which therefore involved the necessity of inserting provisions to satisfy the requirements of the mortmain law."

"After some delay, a trust-deed was prepared, executed, and enrolled; and at the first meeting under it, which took place on the 23d of July, 1862, Lord Stanley was elected chairman, and another of the trustees undertook to act as honorary secretary pro tem., thus facilitating a resolution to postpone as long as possible the appointment of any salaried officers.

Pursuant to the terms of the deed of trust, the main portion of the fund was invested, at its inception, in Government stock and other negotiable securities, the balance being held in readiness for early expenditure, so soon as a decision could be come to as to the most advantageous method of employing the fund in conformity with the intentions and subject to the conditions laid down by Mr. Peabody."

But the legal difficulty arising from the fact that the donation was a gift made during the lifetime of the giver, was not the only one which met the trustees at the outset. "By the express terms of the gift, it was directed to be applied to the amelioration of the condition and the improvement of the comforts of the well-to-do poor of London; and 'it became essential to determine who are the poor of London in the eye of the law.'"

Many people will at first be surprised that any difficulty should be experienced in ascertaining what class of people is denoted by the expression "the poor." But class-distinctions among men, like class-distinctions throughout the organic and inorganic world, instead of being separated by clearly-defined lines of demarcation, run into one another; and even legal authorities are sometimes puzzled and undecided whether a certain individual belongs to one or the other of two contiguous social grades. The unsettled nature of public opinion on this point has been well exemplified by the complaints and criticisms that have from time to time appeared in the London daily press, to the effect that the benefits of the Peabody Fund were reaped by a more well-to-do class of people than those characterized by the donor as the "poor of London."

"It has hitherto been held," says the report already referred to, "that the authority of judicial decisions, in the absence of any governing or qualifying expressions, a gift or bequest to 'the poor' of any place is applicable exclusively to persons not receiving parochial support; and this, on the principle that to relieve those already chargeable on the parish or the union, inasmuch as it would contribute to the reduction of the rates, would virtually be conferring a benefit on the property rather than on the poverty of the locality."

"Later decisions have somewhat modified this law; the rigidity of the law would now be more or less tempered to adapt it to the necessities of the donor, and the mode of the receipt of alms would not perhaps of itself suffice to disqualify an indigent family for receiving additional comforts from the donations or bequests of benevolent men like Mr. Peabody."

Be this as it may, the trustees decided "to confine their attention, in the first instance, to that section of the laboring poor who occupy a position above the pauper." The wisdom of this decision few will call in question, except that still too numerous class of people who think the bestowment of alms on those who will rather beg than work, and whose indolence, imprudence, or intemperance prevents them from ever rising above their present position, or deriving any permanent advantage from the profuse charities of a well-meaning but short-sighted public, is more commendable than to assist the honest, hard-working laborer who, notwithstanding all that industry and strict economy can accomplish, is often sorely pressed to provide for those dependent on him.

"Public attention throughout the United Kingdom having been attracted by the largeness of Mr. Peabody's bounty, communications were received from numerous quarters suggesting benevolent plans for adoption. Many of these were in themselves highly desirable, but the majority involved arrangements of a more or less extensive nature, which would necessitate the intervention of the aid of trust. For example, institutions connected with religious bodies were expressly excluded, and educational establishments, as ordinarily organized, were open to the same objection, inasmuch as they are more or less dependent for their success upon denominational favor.

Hospitals, both for acute and chronic disease, presented strong claims; but on one, amongst other grounds, their consideration was deferred. Mr. Peabody, in his communication to the trustees, had not specially directed that the fund should be so employed as to render it reproductive; but that passage in his letter which he expressed his hope 'that not the present only, but future generations of the people of London,' would appreciate its advantages, was felt to be entitled to the widest construction of which it was susceptible; and it appears to point to a mode of investment such as, while administering to the immediate enjoyments of the laboring poor of London, would also bear within itself the germ of future extension and perpetuity. This result did not seem to be attainable in the case of hospitals, which would absorb without returning any portion of the fund. The same remark applies to almshouses and dwellings for the reception and support of the absolutely destitute, whose subsistence would necessarily be a perpetual charge, without presenting the slightest element of self-support; and attention was thus forcibly directed to the object dictated by Mr. Peabody himself, of erecting dwellings for the laboring poor on such improved principles as to conduce to such economy, sobriety, and social enjoyment. This mode of employing the fund has also the recommendation that the low rents at which this healthy accommodation could be given would annually supplement the original fund, and thus create a source whence similar advantages might continue to be derived for an almost indefinite period.

"In postponing other projects, such as those above already alluded to, it is not to be supposed that the trustees ignore their value or question their importance; but a concurrence of circumstances, at the moment, combined to give pre-eminence to the one just referred to. "In the poorer districts of London, the dwellings of the poorer classes had been suddenly disturbed by the long-pending invasion of metropolitan railroads, whose incursions were throwing whole streets inhabited by humble and industrious laborers and artisans. The dispossessed population, unprovided with adequate accommodation elsewhere, were thus driven away into alleys and courts, already inconveniently crowded by their previous inmates; and discomfort and disease were in many instances added to loss of employment and expense. 'Even in our crowded and deplorable districts,' says a gentleman, writing in 1865, "such as the streets and alleys running out of Drury Lane, and in the region of the Seven Dials, apartments are so packed and the rents in some neighborhoods have been raised fifty per cent. Small tenements were not regarded as an eligible property, and the construction of them did not invite the enterprise of ordinary capitalists. The consequence was that, poverty apart, a workman had great difficulty in obtaining decent lodgings, even with the means of paying for them in his pocket. How extreme was the distress may be inferred from the fact that, besides Mr. Peabody's scheme, some seven or eight large organizations (differing from the former, however, in being purely commercial transactions) have been devised, and are now in operation for building improved dwellings for the working classes."

Taking these peculiar circumstances into account, few will hesitate to admit that Mr. Peabody's trustees reasoned wisely when they came to the resolution, "without precluding the consideration of other subjects hereafter, to confine their operations for the present to the object specially recommended to their notice by Mr. Peabody, viz., the improvement of dwellings for the poor of the metropolis."

Enabled by this decision to proceed promptly with the business of the trust, the next inquiries of the trustees were directed to the system and style of buildings most conducive to the objects in view, and to the acquisition of sites in districts of the city most suitable for their erection; these sites to be distributed throughout the various quarters of London in order to diffuse the benefits of Mr. Peabody's gift over the largest possible area.

"The first site chosen was in Commercial street, Spitalfields, near the terminus of the Eastern Counties Railway, where a space equal to 13,624 square feet was obtained from the Commissioners of Public Works for £3800. For a further expenditure, something under £24,000 for buildings, accommodation was obtained for upward of 200 persons in tenements of one, two, or three apartments each, according to the requirements of the several occupants. The latter sum included also the cost of erecting nine shops on the ground floor, the rents of which, amounting to nearly £500 per annum, go to increase the general fund, and thus contribute to the reproductive character which it is the desire of the trustees to impart to it."

"Before the dwellings at Spitalfields were completed, the trustees were enabled to possess themselves of other sites in districts similarly claiming attention. At Chelsea a plot, containing 13,616 square feet, was obtained for £4616 18s. 6d.; for another, at Bermondsey, with an area of 27,880 square feet, they gave £4870 7s. 3d.; a fourth at Islington, measuring 47,863 square feet, cost £2646 5s. 6d.; and for £4300 a fifth was acquired at Shadwell, the extent of which is over 73,890 square feet."

While the houses at Commercial street were still in progress, the trustees commenced, on their premises at Islington, the erection of four blocks of buildings, to comprise in all 155 tenements, containing, as at Spitalfields, one, two, or three rooms each, and furnishing ample accommodation for upwards of 650 persons. The whole cost of these buildings, inclusive of the sum paid for the land, amounted to £40,397 2s. 1d.

Before the square at Islington was finished, the trustees entered into a contract for the sum of £37,953 to build on a similar scale on their property at Shadwell.

On the 29th of February, 1864, the first pile of buildings erected in Commercial street, Spitalfields, was thrown open to receive its inmates, and the number of applicants was, and continues to be, considerably in excess of the accommodation available. The number of persons who took possession of their new homes was upward of two hundred.

We give an illustration of the buildings at Islington, which were opened in September, 1865. They have been erected on the site of a pile of buildings known as Ward's place, Essex road, formerly inhabited by a dense population of the worst character in the metropolis, who herded together with little or no attention to morality or decency. What a contrast to the healthy, tidy, respectable, and industrious people who now, through Mr. Peabody's bounty, inhabit the same spot. The entire community, at the close of the year 1865, consisted of 674 individuals of whom 19 were widows, the rest married persons and children.

At Shadwell, the four ranges of buildings forming Peabody Square, and containing 195 tenements, were completed and ready for occupation at the close of the year 1866; but owing to the depression of business, and the consequent suspension of employment in that part of London, they were somewhat slow in filling. At the commencement of the year 1867, the number of families resident was 167.

During last year a fourth range of buildings, forming what is now known as Peabody Square, was erected in Victoria street, West; it was completed at the end of December, and contains 235 rooms, fully occupied by 359 individuals. There is at present a large list of applications for future vacancies.

"All the buildings are substantially constructed of brick. They consist of four detached blocks of houses, five stories in height, which are let out in tenements of one, two, and three rooms. In the buildings at Westminster, the square consists of only three blocks, with one open side, while in those at Shadwell each block is six instead of five stories in height. The buildings at Spitalfields also present a somewhat different arrangement. Each block is surmounted by a handsome ornamental turret. The upper story or attic is appropriated to the laundry, wash-houses, and bath—a bath-room, and a cistern capable of containing nearly 2000 gallons of water, being placed at each end of this spacious and well-ventilated drying-loft. The principal and organization in each of these extensive structures are essentially the same; the only differences consist in such improvements in matters of detail as experience enabled the trustees to introduce into the more recently-erected buildings. To each block there is but one entrance, which is placed in the centre of its length, and on the side looking into the interior of the square. The living rooms on each story are approached from a corridor, which runs along the middle from one end of the building to the other, and is lighted at each end, as well as thoroughly ventilated, by the wide, centrally-situated staircase, which is unenclosed on the outer side except by an iron railing. The lavatories, sinks, and other such offices, are placed at each end of the corridor, and are placed at the main building. Drainage and ventilation have been insured with the utmost possible care; the instant removal of dust and refuse is effected by means of shafts which descend from every corridor to cellars in the basement, which cellars are accessible, for the purpose of carting away their contents, only from the outside of the square. The passages are all kept clean and lighted with gas, without any cost to the tenants; water from cisterns in the roof is distributed by pipes into every tenement; and the baths which serve as play-grounds for their children, where they are always under their mothers' eyes, and safe from the risk of passing carriages and laden carts."

The cost of the general management of the fund is kept as low as possible. From the commencement, in 1862, to the close of the year 1865, it had amounted in all to only £517 10s. When they had advanced so far as to have a number of dwellings ready for occupation, etc., the trustees found it necessary to employ a secretary to supervise the general affairs of the scheme, and conduct the preliminary inquiries as to the eligibility of those applying for accommodation. A superintendent also resides upon each group of buildings for the purpose of collecting the rents, etc. Still, the working expenses, including salaries, printing, stationery, etc., are far from great, amounting in 1866 to £317 11s.; in 1867 to £268 15s. 4d.; and in 1868 to £271 10s. 6d. So that the general management of this vast scheme, from its commencement in 1862 to the close of last year, has not cost more than £1375 6s. 10d.

The accounts show that, at the close of the year 1865, £55,277 15s. 7d. had been expended on land, buildings, etc.—considerably more than one-half the original fund. At the end of the following year the total expenditure had amounted to £118,118 13s. 2d.; on 31st December, 1867, this had reached £125,356 2s. 10d.; and when the accounts were made up at the close of last year, the total expenditure on the buildings was shown to be £152,631 8s. 4d.—£2631 8s. 4d. more than the original fund; while £20,682 11s. 11d. still remained at the disposal of the trustees. So that, up to 31st December, 1868, the original fund had increased by £23,313 9s. 3d.; £5,750 of this sum being due to interest earned, and £17,563 to the rents; thus fulfilling, in some measure, the generous donor's wish that the fund should be reproductive and perpetual.

"As your course with regard to the former gift of £150,000 is already defined in your trust-deed, I can only express my own views and wishes regarding the appropriation of the principal and income of the second donation, and leave to yourselves and your successors to manage it accordingly. "You are fully authorized to use any portion of the fund in building lodging houses for laboring poor, as expressed in my former letter; but, before many years it is to be apprehended that desirable sites for such buildings may be difficult to obtain at moderate prices within the limits of the metropolis, in that event, it is my desire that my trustees for the time being may seek out and secure, at such rates as the state of the market may warrant, such freehold sites, within ten miles of the present Royal Exchange, as may appear eligible, both on account of salubrity of position and proximity to the great centres of labor and railroad accommodation, due regard being had to the probable burden of taxation. It may also be desirable to obtain from railroad companies the most economical arrangements procurable for the conveyance of working-people at stated hours to and from London at such moderate fares as will come within their means."

"Comfortable and convenient houses are to be erected upon these sites for the exclusive accommodation of the honest and industrious poor of London, under such regulations and on such terms and conditions as my trustees may direct, subject only to the guiding principles laid down in respect to my former donation. "As dwellings in such sites may in some instances be remote from schools and other facilities for instruction, the trustees shall be at liberty in such cases, should they consider it needful, to set apart space adjacent to the building and suitable for school-houses, for the children of the families holding tenements. But such schools must be so organized as carefully to exclude sectarian influences, and so conducted as to avoid denominational jealousy. With this view it is my desire that the course of education shall be exclusively of an elementary and literary character. "I would also suggest to my trustees that, for the mental improvement of the inmates, the school-rooms as well as the lecture-rooms, be open some hours during the evening; and that books, periodicals, and newspapers be provided for those who choose to attend, and that at certain seasons popular and scientific lectures might be introduced at a charge, if any, merely sufficient to defray the expenses. "As some of these dwellings will probably be at inconvenient distances from good markets, I would also suggest to my trustees to consider the propriety, in localities where it may seem to be required, of procuring within the buildings, or near to the apartments in which the tenants may organize co-operative stores for supplying themselves with coal and other necessary articles for their own consumption, subject to such regulations as, in the judgment of my trustees, may be needful. "In conclusion, looking to the object of this donation and to the large development in coming years of an arrangement designed to promote the physical, moral, and social welfare of the deserving poor of the metropolis, I entertain, in a strong and earnest hope that the project will commend itself to the sympathies and judgment of the inhabitants of London as to insure on their part that interest and co-operation which

will secure to future generations of the poor those comforts which, with the blessing of Providence, it is my object to bestow upon them."

Toward the close of last year Mr. Peabody intimated to his trustees his intention of increasing this second trust by an additional £100,000.

As already stated, up to the end of last year nothing had yet been done with the £200,000 constituting the second trust.

SHIPING. FOR LIVERPOOL AND QUEENSTOWN—Imman Line of Mail Steamers are appointed to sail as follows:— City of Brooklyn, Saturday, Nov. 13, at 1 P. M. City of London, Saturday, Nov. 20, at 1 P. M. City of Washington, Saturday, Nov. 27, at 12 noon. And each succeeding Saturday and alternate Tuesday from Pier 46, North River.

PRICES OF PASSAGE. TO BOSTON AND NEW YORK. FIRST CABIN, £10 10s. SECOND CABIN, £8 10s. THIRD CABIN, £6 10s. PAYABLE IN CURRENCY. Liverpool, £80. London, £100. New York, £120. Passengers forwarded to Havre, Hamburg, Bremen, etc. Tickets can be bought here at moderate rates by persons wishing to send for their friends. JOHN G. DALE, Agent, No. 15 BROADWAY, New York. Sole Agents for Philadelphia, Adams Express Company, No. 41 CHESTNUT STREET.

ONLY-DIRECT LINE TO FRANCE. THE GENERAL TRANSPORTATION CO. MAIL STEAMSHIPS BETWEEN NEW YORK AND PARIS. The splendid new vessels on this favorite route for the Continent will sail from Pier No. 31, North River, every Saturday.

PHILADELPHIA, RICHMOND, AND NORFOLK STEAMSHIP LINE. THROUGH ROUTE TO NEW YORK VIA THE SOUTH AND WEST. At noon, from FIRST WHARF, FOR MARKET THROUGH RAIL TO all points in North and South Carolina, via Seaboard Air Line Railroad, connecting at Norfolk with the Lynchburg and Roanoke and the West, via Virginia and Tennessee Air Line and Richmond, West, via Norfolk and Chesapeake Bay, and the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. Freight HANDLED BUT ONCE, and taken at LOWER RATES THAN ANY OTHER LINE. The regular sailing schedule of this route commends it to the public as the most desirable medium for carrying every description of freight. Charges for commission, drayage, or any expense transferred. Steamships insured at the lowest rates. Freight received daily.

NOTICE.—FOR NEW YORK, VIA DELAWARE AND CHESAPEAKE CANALS. THE CHEAPEST AND QUICKEST water communication between Philadelphia and New York. Steamers leave daily from first wharf below Market street, Philadelphia, at 10 o'clock, A. M., for New York, North East, and West, free of commission. Goods forwarded by all the lines of the route. Freight received and forwarded on liberal terms. WILLIAM F. CLYDE & CO., Agents, No. 12 S. DELAWARE STREET, PHILADELPHIA. JAMES HAND, Agent, No. 119 WALL STREET, New York.

NEW EXPRESS LINE TO Alexandria, Georgetown, and Washington, D. C., via Chesapeake and Delaware Canals, and connections at Alexandria from the most direct route for Lynchburg, Bristol, Knoxville, Nashville, Dalton, and New Orleans. Steamers leave regularly every Saturday at noon from first wharf above Market street, Philadelphia. Freight received daily.

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